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REMARKS

Telephonic Interview

Applicants sincerely appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiner Sanchez during the telephone interview on November 19, 2001. During the conversation, Examiner Sanchez indicated that he prefers the claims to be amended to clarify that the tear bar and the strip of media do not move relative to each other during separation of the strip of media. It is understood that Examiner Sanchez will evaluate the amendments with his Primary to consider whether to allow the claims.

10 Amendment

By this proposed amendment, claims 22 and 30 have been amended to include language that the tear bar and the strip of media do not move relative to each other during separation of the strip of media. Applicants did not use the exact language suggested by Examiner Sanchez in order to avoid using a negative limitation. Applicants used affirmative language but similar in context with Examiner Sanchez's suggestion.

Moreover, Applicants submit that claims 22 and 30 are patentable over Saito et. al. because Saito et. al. does not disclose a tear bar and a strip of media that are in a fixed position relative to each other during separation of the strip of media. Rather, Saito et. al. discloses a tear bar that moves vertically relative to the strip of media to burst or separate the strip of media.

The amendments of this Amendment have not been made to overcome the rejections. Applicants believe that the original claims are patentable over the cited reference. Applicants made amendments to obtain early allowance of the application. Accordingly, Applicants assert that no claims have been narrowed within the meaning of Festo.

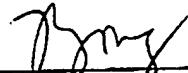
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CONCLUSION

For all of the above reasons, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. If the examiner has any questions regarding the application or this response, the examiner is encouraged to call Applicants' agent, Rolando J. Tong, at (775) 826-6160.

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Respectfully submitted,



Rolando J. Tong, Patent Agent
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS SHOWING CHANGES MADE

22. (Amended) A tear bar system comprising:

(A) a strip of media, the media comprising:

(a) a surface;

5 (b) a first side;

(c) a second side;

(d) a center portion between the first and second side; and

(e) a plurality of perforations, the perforations being separated by a plurality
of bridges of connecting material;

10 (B) a tear bar, the tear bar comprising:

(a) a first side portion, the first side portion being adapted to abut the surface
of the media in close relative proximity to a first bridge of connecting
material and apply resistance on the media when a longitudinal force is
applied to the media, wherein the first side portion comprises a tapered
surface, wherein the height of the tear bar decreases as the tear bar is
traversed in the direction from the first side of the strip of media towards
the center portion of the strip of media;

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(b) a second side portion, the second side portion being adapted to abut the
surface of the media in close relative proximity to a second bridge of
connecting material and apply resistance on the media when a longitudinal
force is applied to the media; and

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(c) wherein the tear bar and the strip of media are [remains] in a fixed position
relative to each other during [feeding and] separation of the strip of media.

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30. (Amended) A method of separating a piece of media from a strip of media, the method comprising the following steps:

(A) providing a strip of media, the media comprising:

- (a) a surface;
- (b) a first side;
- (c) a second side;
- (d) a center portion; and
- (e) an end portion;

(B) providing a tear bar, the tear bar comprising:

- (a) a first side portion, the first side portion being adapted to abut the surface of the media and apply resistance on the media when a longitudinal force is applied to the media, wherein the first side portion comprises a tapered surface, wherein the height of the tear bar decreases as the tear bar is traversed in the direction from the first edge of the strip of media towards the center portion of the strip of media; and
- (b) a second side portion, the second side portion being adapted to abut the surface of the media and apply resistance on the media when a longitudinal force is applied to the media;

(C) positioning the strip of media, wherein the first side is positioned in close relative proximity to the first side portion and the second side is positioned in close relative proximity to the second side portion; and

(D) applying a longitudinal force to the end portion of the strip of media, wherein the first side portion and the second side portion abut the surface of the strip of media and resist the longitudinal movement of the strip of media, wherein the tear bar

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and the strip of media are in a fixed position relative to each other, and wherein a strain is created in the strip of media.]; and

(E) holding the tear bar in a substantially fixed position during feeding and separation of the strip of media.]